

procedures involved under the law. The Board has taken following steps for speedy clearance of the pending cases:—

- * Increased the number of bench hearings.
- * Working of Operating Agencies (OAs) made more effective by insisting on higher level of representations in the hearings.
- * OAs have been directed to monitor and implement Board's decisions on a continuing basis.

Pension Scheme for Associate Banks of SBI

3184. SHRI RAMACHANDRAIAH RUMANDLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether associate banks of SBI have decided to introduce the pension scheme for employees and invited options from them;
- (b) if so, the number of employees who opted for the scheme in each associate Bank;
- (c) whether Government have received complaints that some officers of associate banks have not forwarded the options of some employees to their Head-Office;
- (d) if so, whether concerned banks have explained as to why the action on their options were not taken-up by the Banks; and
- (e) what action Government propose to take to safeguard the interest of the employees whose options have not so far been accepted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Bank-wise number of employees who opted for the pension is as under:

S.No.	Name of the Bank	No. of Employees
1.	State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur	11,678
2.	State Bank of Hyderabad	11,340
3.	State Bank of Indore	4,914
4.	State Bank of Mysore	6,535

S.No.	Name of the Bank	No. of Employees
5.	State Bank of Patiala	7,056
6.	State Bank of Saurashtra	4,456
7.	State Bank of Travancore	8,272

(c) Representations have been received by the State Bank of Bikaner and Jaipur and State Bank of Indore from some of their employees.

(d) and (e) According to State Bank of Bikaner & Jaipur, their 11 employees had represented that though they submitted their pension options in time but the same were not received/recorded at Pension Cell of the Head Office. The bank have reported to have informed the concerned employees that as their pension options were not received in time, no action could be taken as per Pension Regulations.

State Bank of Indore have reported that consent letters for pension of their 14 employees were inadvertently not forwarded by the concerned branches to the Head Office in time. The Board of Trustees of Pension Fund of the Bank at their meeting held on 28.7.2000 have approved acceptance of the pension options of the said 14 employees.

IIDC and Growth Centre of NER as tax free zone

3185. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the federation of Industries of the NER represented to Government for redressal of grievances of certain existing industries in the NER as well as about the requirement of some changes in the taxation and other parameters of the new industrial policy for the region;

(b) if so, the response of Government and action contemplated on each of their suggestions;

(c) whether coverage of industries outside the IIDC and Growth Centre of the NER would be considered eligible for tax free zones; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE